

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY PRAGUE PRIORITY

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AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: XGDS2

TAGS: EPAP, UR

SUBJECT: SOVIET GRAIN HARVEST

FOR HARTMAN

THE FOLLOWING WAS DISTRIBUTED IN THE INR AFTERNOON
SUMMARY TODAY OCTOBER 6. QUOTE. THE CIA HAS REDUCED ITS
ESTIMATE OF THE SOVIET GRAIN CROP TO A RANGE OF 155 TO 165
MILLION TONS, FROM THE PREVIOUS 170. THIS CUT IS BASED ON
A VERY BEARISH OFFICIAL SOVIET STATEMENT ON GRAIN
PRODUCTION IN THE UKRAINE PLUS INDICATIONS THAT 30 TO 40
MILLION ACRES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY WILL NOT BE HARVESTED
(BUT MAY BE GRAZED AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR PASTURE AND FORAGE
LOST THROUGH DROUGHT). THE US DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
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ALREADY UNEASY BECAUSE PROCUREMENT REPORTS FROM THE UKRAINE

HAVE NOT BEEN ISSUED, IS EXPECTED TO LOWER ITS 175 MILLION TON ESTIMATE SHORTLY.

IF THE LATEST PROJECTIONS ARE CORRECT, THERE IS NO WAY THE USSR CAN GET THROUGH UNTIL NEXT YEAR'S CROP WITHOUT SIGNIFICANT REDUCTIONS IN LIVESTOCK HERDS,

BECAUSE:

--WORLD GRAIN RESERVES ARE NEAR MINIMUM LEVELS,

--WORLD GRAIN OUTPUT IS NOW PROJECTED AT LESS THAN THE TWO YEAR AVERAGE OF 1973-75, AND

--SOVIET LIVESTOCK NUMBERS (JULY 1975) WERE ABOUT 8 PERCENT LARGER THAN IN 1972, BUT THE GRAIN CROP WILL BE SMALLER.

IN 1972, LARGE-SCALE IMPORTS ENABLED THE SOVIETS TO MAINTAIN HOG NUMBERS WHILE INCREASING CATTLE AND POULTRY, ALBEIT AT A REDUCED RATE. FIGURES FOR AUGUST 1975, INDICATE ACCELERATED SLAUGHTER, ADDITIONAL MEAT PRODUCTION, AND THAT A REDUCTION IN HOG NUMBERS HAS ALREADY COMMENCED. END QUOTE. KISSINGER

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